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PIVOT

INTEGRATING DEIA+B TO

Improve Workplace Culture and Equity

Achieving sustainable development and humanitarian outcomes relies on emphasizing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility + Belonging (DEIA+B) for all. Through the innovative development and refinement of leadership skills and by building high-trust relationships, DEIA+B is not only an essential component of the PIVOT approach, but a core value woven into the DNA of PIVOT.

Practical, InnoVative, On-the-Job Technical Support (PIVOT) is a demand-driven, holistic, and immersive learning-by-doing approach to mobilizing Agency-wide strategies and priority frameworks designed to achieve sustainable and scalable development and humanitarian outcomes. PIVOT is designed to build key technical skills while enhancing collaboration, learning, and adapting (CLA), and leadership development in a brave, equitable, and engaging environment that encourages experimentation, reflection, and feedback; bringing about organizational change at the individual, team, and Mission level. To date, PIVOT has been mobilized to support the Agency's Private-Sector Engagement Policy and the Climate Strategy – notably the strategy's Special Objective – Doing Our Part, climate equity, and inclusive leadership. Refer to the PIVOT 1.0, 2.0, and Climate and Finance Practicum Learning Reviews for more information regarding the achievements of the PIVOT approach to date.



For the PIVOT 1.0 Learning Review, scan the QR code or by access the file online at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZP78.pdf.



For the PIVOT 2.0 Learning Review, scan the QR code or by access the file online at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZP7H.pdf.



For the CFP Learning Review, scan the QR code or by access the file online at https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZV9Z.pdf.

HOW PIVOT REFLECTS DEIA+B PRINCIPLES FOR MEANGINGFUL IMPACT

Awareness of oneself as an individual, as a member of a team, and as an integral part of an organization is a core foundational DEIA+B skill emphasized in PIVOT. PIVOT leverages participatory and self-knowledge tools, such as the enneagram tool, helping participants reflect upon and understand their individual working styles. Participants also learn how their personality type compares to and compliments others, instilling the message that there is more than one way of engaging with the world while also building high-trust relationships. By becoming aware of self, PIVOT participants are able to identify their natural response to various situations including circumstances of high excitement, stress, and threat or conflict. To help participants bridge the gap between simply recognizing their natural responses and altering their behavior to meaningfully participate within a diverse team either as a team member or team leader, PIVOT further facilitates knowledge and capacity building around five practices (listed below) grounded in USAID's Leadership Philosophy and DEIA+B strategy.

In addition to awareness of self and others, PIVOT reinforces three other critical values within its design, approach, and implementation to promote DEIA+B in efforts to strengthen the operations and approaches of the Agency's programming. These include: (1) belonging, (2) inclusive leadership, and (3) climate equity.

- 1 Belonging.** Supporting individuals to feel comfortable to be present, to share opinions, to feel cared about and accepted, and not afraid to be oneself as members of diverse and inclusive teams. Individuals who have a strong sense of belonging often feel seen, heard, and valued as individuals as well as members of teams and organization
- 2 Inclusive Leadership.** Preparing to respectfully engage with others by practicing mindfulness; exercising purposeful communication through active listening, nonviolent communication, giving and receiving feedback, and repairing and apologizing; assessing intercultural competencies, navigating power dynamics, and disrupting biases.
- 3 Climate Equity.** Ensuring affected populations are heard, local knowledge is recognized and included, key insights emerge about the challenge and context, and trust is built. Moreover, within an equitable environment decisions and priorities are driven by people most affected by climate change, so that solutions are locally led, contextually relevant, trusted, sustainable, and beneficial to the communities USAID serves.



Taken together, PIVOT's elevation of DEIA+B helps to achieve meaningful participation and leadership from a diverse set of actors across partner Missions. These elements are critical to ensure that participants not only gain and apply valuable knowledge and skills from PIVOT, but are able to share in the benefits as well.

ELEMENTS OF DEIA+B FOR PIVOT

- **Mindfulness** is the practice of being fully present and engaged in one's immediate environment, paying attention to thoughts and feelings without judgment. Focusing on and being present can reduce stress, enhance decision-making abilities, improve mental health, and foster non-judgmental and purposeful communication, valuable qualities within USAID's workplace culture. This practice can stimulate creativity and innovation by encouraging employees to think more deeply and openly about problems and solutions faced on an individual and group level, and initiating the promotion of inclusivity and awareness of individually held biases and assumptions. Mindfulness can also be an effective tool for improving organizational culture and creating a positive, more equitable, respectful and productive workplace culture.
- **Purposeful Communication** gives space and value to the practice of everyone's voices and contributions being heard, which can contribute to a more equitable and diverse workplace. A number of skills are utilized to achieve purposeful communication: (1) active listening – which asks individuals to understand different perspectives and experiences, (2) giving and receiving feedback – which provides opportunities to learn and improve and hear from others, and (3) repairing and apologizing – which demonstrates commitment to equity and respect by acknowledging when mistakes are made. Together, these skills establish the foundation needed for participants to establish effective working relationships built on authenticity, trust, and innovation to then engage internal and external stakeholders meaningfully as a team and organization.
- **Navigating power dynamics.** Critical to one's leadership skills is the ability to acknowledge and consider how power, privilege, and vulnerability intersect. Power is widely understood as the ability to influence or control others, whereas vulnerability denotes the willingness to be seen and show up in uncertain, risky, and emotionally charged situations. To navigate power dynamics effectively, it is crucial to recognize and acknowledge one's own power and privilege, as well as that of others. This involves actively listening to and valuing the perspectives and experiences of those who are marginalized or vulnerable, and endeavoring to address power imbalances through equitable decision-making processes and inclusive practices. By prioritizing inclusivity, transparency, and accountability, individuals and organizations can navigate power dynamics to achieve more equitable and just outcomes.
- **Practices for Disrupting Biases.** Operationalizing inclusive leadership techniques for climate action is a process that involves taking concrete actions to identify, address, and disrupt instances of bias within PIVOT teams. This is done explicitly by providing training and resources to individuals to recognize and address bias. Teams explore five common types of bias, agree which ones they want to focus on in their work as a team and develop a “disruptor” signal to flag for each other when they see a potential bias in the way they are discussing or designing their work. In addition to aligning on how to interrupt, participants learn and practice the art of receiving feedback or interruption when they may demonstrate bias without defensiveness using nonviolent communication and mindfulness. The overall objective is to foster a more equitable and inclusive environment by actively working to eliminate bias and discrimination.

- **Intercultural competence** is a vital skill set for individuals to navigate interactions appropriately and successfully with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Moving beyond surface-level awareness, intercultural competence requires a deep understanding of different values, beliefs, and behaviors. Developing this competence can lead individuals to build strong relationships based on mutual respect and understanding, contributing to a more tolerant and prosperous global community. Within the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC), there are five mindsets or orientations identified within this developmental framework of attitudes and behaviors individuals may experience as they engage with different cultures. Each mindset builds on the previous one and represents a progressive shift towards greater intercultural competence. Developing intercultural competence is a lifelong journey and requires ongoing learning, self-reflection, and practice.

IDC Mindsets

Denial

limited capability for understanding and appropriately responding to cultural differences.

Polarization

views cultural differences as an “us vs. them” perspective

Minimization

highlights commonalities in both human similarity (basic needs) and Universalism (universal values and principles), often masking a deeper understanding of cultural differences

Acceptance

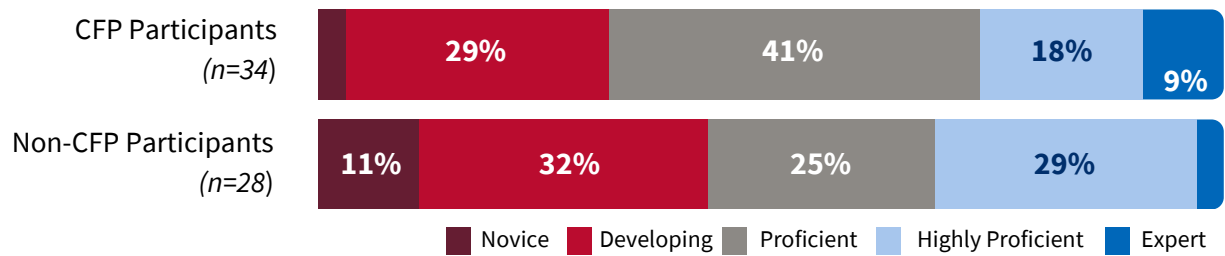
recognizes and appreciates cultural differences and commonality

Adaptation

seamlessly adapts to other cultures, adjusting their behavior and communication style to facilitate intercultural interactions



Figure 1. Has a strong understanding of power dynamics and know how to seek contributions from a diverse group of individuals



Lasting DEIA Impacts of the PIVOT Approach

A majority of participants from PIVOT cohorts to date have self-reported improved DEIA skills. By acquiring and applying knowledge and skills such as self-awareness, mindfulness, and purposeful communication, PIVOT successfully encourages participants to bring their ideas, experiences, culture, and voice – their whole self – to work while motivating them to make room for others to do the same. Independent, third-party learning reviews revealed the extent to which PIVOT is changing the way participants think about teamwork and how they engage with others – including local communities – in diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible ways.

PIVOT participants are more likely than non-participants to leverage an understanding of power dynamics when seeking contributions from diverse groups (refer to figure 1). Illustrating this built capacity, PIVOT participants are more likely than non-participants to use active listening skills and similarly developed proficiency in pause-and-reflect sessions to facilitate democratic decision making. Notably, PIVOT participants sustained and even further developed critical DEIA+B skills more than a year after the program. Participants’ proficiency considering power dynamics (refer to figure 2) and using mindfulness techniques to regulate responses (refer to figure 3) all increased from the end of cohort 2 in 2021 and a follow up in 2022.

Figure 2. Intentionally consider factors like gender, workplace hierarchies, social status, and other forms of power in my decision making

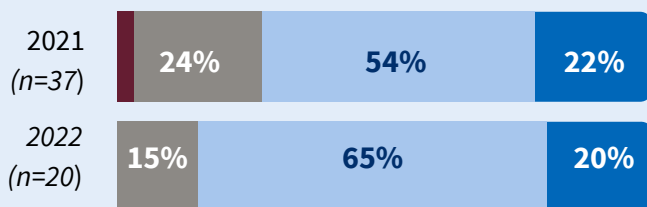
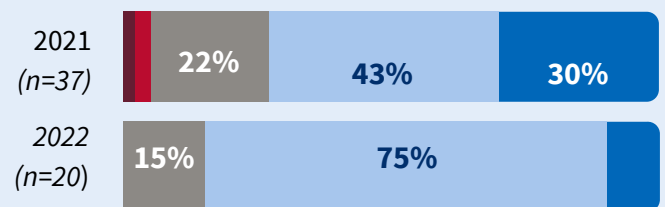


Figure 3. Practice techniques that enable me to be more composed, flexible, and less emotionally reactive in the workplace





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Visit the [PIVOT website](#) by scanning the QR code.

Amy Lovejoy, Change Maker
Imagining Risks Worth Taking
Phone: 202-276-0883
Email alovejoy@usaid.gov

